

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This amendment is filed in response to the office action mailed June 5, 2007. A petition for a three month extension of time is submitted herewith.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Examiner has rejected claims 1-3, 5-8, 14-20, 23, 31, 32, 34-38, and 52-87 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Muir et al. (WO 00/04078; published January 27, 2000) in view of either Meuller et al. (EP 362137) or Vanderlaan et al. (US 6,087,415) and in view of Martin et al (US6,039,899).

The present application defines dwell time “the elapsed time from which the monomer mixture is dispensed into the mold until curing commences”. Page 16, lines 28-30. None of the references, taken alone or in combination disclose any dwell time, let alone the dwell time recited in the present claims.

All references to Muir et al. are to the US counterpart, US 6,893,595. Muir et al. discloses “coating a mold with a reactive polymer, a liquid curable composition is filled in to the mold and cured under conditions such that the reactive polymer becomes covalently bonded to the cured bulk mold material at the interface.” Muir et al. abstract. Muir et al. does not disclose that the polymers which are recited in amended claim 1, and claims 14 and 21 could be used in a coating solution. Instead, Muir et al. discloses in Example 15, column 31, lines 40-43, that HEMA, a **monomer**, may be included in the coating solution. Muir et al. also does not disclose a dwell time of less than about 5 minutes or less then about 45 seconds.

Meuller et al. discloses polymer composite articles formed via transfer-grafting. See page 7, lines 38-40. However, Meuller et al. is silent with respect to the desirability of a dwell time, let alone the dwell times recited in the present claims.

Vanderlaan et al. discloses “contacting at least one surface of a medical device with a coating effective amount of a carboxyl-functional polymer and . . . at least one coupling agent”. Column 1, lines 39-42. One or more surfaces of a device may be coated using the process of the invention. Vanderlaan et al., column 2, lines 38-39 (emphasis added). Preparation 1, column 6, lines 1-10, discloses making an uncoated silicone hydrogel contact lens, which is then coated by contacting the formed lens with a coating solution and a coupling agent (Example 1). Vanderlaan et al. neither discloses nor suggests

- (a) coating a molding surface with a high molecular weight coating composition;

- (b) dispensing a monomer mixture comprising, a silicone-containing hydrogel monomer, into the mold or mold half; and
- (c) c.) curing the monomer mixture and the coating composition using a dwell time of less than about 5 minutes and under conditions suitable to form an article coated with the coating composition.

Martin et al. discloses an apparatus and process for making contact lenses. Martin et al. discloses suitable time for injection molding of the contact lens molds at col. 10, lines 60-67, discloses a precure for a unitary lens at col. 32, lines 28-41 and discloses clamping and cure time at col. 35, lines 30-33.

Martin et al. discloses

“The resultant lens is in a gel state with some areas of the lens having the least thickness, i.e. the edge, having a higher degree of polymerization than the body. The clamping and the precure of the edge, under pressure, results in a cleaner and more evenly defined edge for the final lens product.” Col. 35, lines 28-33.

Martin further discloses times for clamping the mold halves together, and cure times for the lens. Thus Martin discloses a cure time for making the molds, a clamp time, a procure time for the lens, and a cure time for the lens, but does not disclose a dwell time. Thus, Martin et al. does not disclose or suggest coating a molding surface with a high molecular weight coating composition or a dwell time of less than about 5 minutes.

None of the references cited by Examiner disclose or suggest a dwell time as recited in the present claims. The present specification further discloses that dwell times are “critical because the coating composition is soluble in the hydrogel and silicone-containing hydrogel monomer mixtures.” Page 16, lines 30-31. It is not obvious from the references cited that the coating composition would be soluble in the hydrogel, nor that utilizing the disclosed dwell time would be desirable.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-3, 5-8, 14-20, 23, 31, 32, 34-38, and 52-87 are patentable over Muir et al. in view of either Meuller et al. or Vanderlaan et al. and in view of Martin et al. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Examiner has further rejected claims 9, 10, 24, 25, 39 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Muir et al. in view of either Meuller et al. or Vanderlaan et al. and in view of Martin et in view of Li et al. (US6,565,776).

Li et al discloses “using inorganic material to coat the optical surfaces and sidewalls of mold parts made from clear-resin materials”. The coating materials protect “the clear resin from

interaction with otherwise reactive monomers from which the molded article is made, such coatings can also be used to achieve preferential release. Li et al. abstract. Thus the coatings of Li et al. remain on the lens mold and do not become part of the contact lens. Li et al. discloses neither processes for making coated contact lenses, nor the recited dwell times. Thus, Li et al. does not cure the deficiencies of the previously discussed references.

Examiner has further rejected claims 11, 26 and 41 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Muir et al. in view of either Meuller et al. or Vanderlaan et al. and in view of Martin et al. in view of Soye et al. (US5,316,700). Claim 11 depends indirectly from claim 1, which recites a 5 minute dwell time. Claim 26 depends indirectly from claim 14, which recites a 5 minute dwell time. Claim 41 depends indirectly from claim 31, which recites a 45 second dwell time.

Soye et al. et al discloses “providing [a] cavity for excess lens forming material with at least two openings and producing differential gas pressure across the opening to remove excess lens forming material.” Soye et al. abstract. Soye et al. does not disclose methods for forming coated contact lenses, or dwell times useful therefore. Thus, Soye et al. does not cure the deficiencies of the previously discussed references.

Examiner has further rejected claims 19, 20, 34 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Muir et al. in view of either Meuller et al. or Vanderlaan et al. and in view of Martin et al. in view of Turner et al. (US6,565,776).

Turner et al discloses coating a hydrophobic lens substrate “with a hydrophilic material having an expansion factor greater than one.” Turner neither discloses nor suggests a dwell time of less than 5 minutes or 45 seconds as recited in the present claims. Thus, Turner et al. does not cure the deficiencies of the previously discussed references.

Conclusions

Applicants respectfully submit that the foregoing arguments and amendments have traversed the Examiner’s rejections. Withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the claims as amended is respectfully requested. If the Examiner is of a contrary view, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at (904) 443-3074.

Respectfully submitted,

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